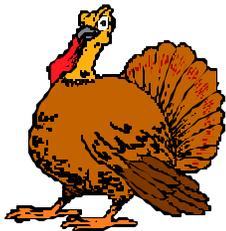


# FACTS f o r FEATURES



CB03-FF.18

November 13, 2003



## Thanksgiving Day, 2003



The nation's first Thanksgiving took place in December 1621 as the religious separatist Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate the bountiful harvest they reaped following their first winter in North America. The day did not become a national holiday until 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national day of Thanksgiving. Over the next 75 years, presidents annually followed Lincoln's example. In his Thanksgiving proclamation of 1939, President Franklin Roosevelt clarified that the holiday should henceforth be celebrated on the fourth Thursday, not the last, to encourage earlier holiday shopping. In 1941, Congress made this change permanent.

### 269 million

The preliminary estimate of the number of turkeys raised in the United States in 2003 — nearly one for every U.S. resident. That's down 1 percent from 2002. The turkeys produced in 2002 weighed 7.4 billion pounds (370,000 tons) altogether and were valued at \$2.7 billion. <<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>>

### 109 million

Number of occupied housing units across the nation — all potential gathering places for people to celebrate the holiday. <<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/tabHH-1.pdf>>

### Where Those Mounds of Food Come From

#### 45.5 million

The number of turkeys Minnesota expects to raise in 2003. North Carolina produces a nearly identical total (45.0 million birds), making the Gopher and Tar Heel states the top two in turkey production. They are followed by Missouri (27.5 million), Arkansas (24.0 million), Virginia (23.0 million) and California (16.5 million). These six states are expected to account for about 2 of every 3 U. S. turkeys in 2003.

<<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>>





## 583 million pounds

The forecast weight of U.S. cranberry production in 2003, up 3 percent from 2002. Wisconsin leads all states in the production of cranberries, with 305 million pounds, followed by Massachusetts (170 million), New Jersey (47 million), Oregon (44 million) and Washington (17 million). <<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>>



## 1.3 billion pounds

The weight of sweet potatoes — another popular Thanksgiving staple — produced in the United States in 2002. North Carolina (481 million pounds) produced more sweet potatoes than any other state. It was followed by California (276 million), Mississippi (197 million) and Louisiana (188 million). <<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>>

## 791 million pounds

Total U.S. pumpkin production in 2002. Illinois, with a production of 299 million pounds, led the country. There also were big pumpkin patches in California (with a production of 150 million lbs.), Pennsylvania (117 million) and New York (107 million). Pumpkin pie is a popular dessert at Thanksgiving. <<http://www.usda.gov/nass/>>



## \$10.5 million

The value of U.S. imports of live turkeys between January and August 2003 — all from Canada. Our northern neighbors also accounted for most (\$250,000 worth) of the cranberries the United States imported; Sweden accounted for the rest: \$61,000. When it came to sweet potatoes, however, the Dominican Republic was the source of most (\$1.5 million) of the total imports (\$1.6 million). During this period, the United States ran a \$4.2 million trade deficit in live turkeys, but had \$3.3 million cranberry and \$10.7 million sweet potato surpluses. <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>>

## 13.8 pounds

Amount of turkey consumed by the typical American annually and, if tradition be true, a good bit of it at Thanksgiving time. Per capita turkey consumption is virtually the same as in 1990 (13.8 pounds), but 70 percent higher than in 1980 (8.1 pounds). On the other hand, annual per capita sweet potato consumption is 4.3 pounds, down slightly from 1990 (4.6 pounds) but the same as 1980 (4.4 pounds). (Source: the soon-to-be-released *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2003*.)



## The Price is Right

### 99

Cost per pound, in pennies, that is, of a frozen whole turkey in December 2002. (Source: the soon-to-be-released *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2003*.)

## Where to Feast



**3**

Number of places nationwide named after the holiday’s traditional main entree. Turkey, Texas, was the most populous in 2002, with 482 residents; followed by Turkey Creek, La. (361); and Turkey, N.C. (264). There also are 11 townships around the country named “Turkey,” three of them in Kansas.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-106.html>>

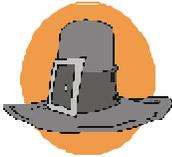
<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

**8**

Number of places and townships in the United States that are named “Cranberry” or some variation of the name for the red, acidic berry (e.g., Cranbury, N.J.).

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

**20**



Number of places in the United States named Plymouth, as in “Plymouth Rock,” legendary location of the first Thanksgiving. Plymouth, Minn., is the most populous, with 67,304 residents in 2002; Plymouth, Mass., had 53,789. Speaking of Plymouth Rock, there is a single township in the United States named “Pilgrim.” Located in Dade County, Mo., its population is 135.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-106.html>>

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau’s *Facts for Features* series:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| African-American History Month (February)                | Back to School (August)                      |
| Valentine’s Day (Feb. 14)                                | Labor Day (Sept. 1)                          |
| Women’s History Month (March)                            | Grandparents Day (Sept. 7)                   |
| St. Patrick’s Day (March 17)                             | Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)   |
| Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)              | Halloween (Oct. 31)                          |
| Older Americans Month (May)                              | American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month |
| Mother’s Day (May 11)                                    | (November)                                   |
| Father’s Day (June 15)                                   | Veterans Day (Nov. 11)                       |
| The Fourth of July (July 4)                              | Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 27)                   |
| Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26) | The Holiday Season (December)                |

**Editor’s note:** Some of the preceding data were collected in surveys and, therefore, are subject to sampling error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau’s Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <[pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)>.